

COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

May 2002

March Retirements Bring April Appointments at the County

With the enhanced retirement benefits taking effect in March, the County braced for some big changes.

March is typically the most popular month for retirements, and with the new benefits in place more than 5,500 active and deferred retirement association members became eligible to retire between March 8 and April 30.

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association (SDCERA) prepared for the worst, but fortunately not all eligible members filed for retirement. Still, a total of 710 members did retire—that's about two years worth in just one month!

With those vacancies came many changes in key leadership positions.

Rich Robinson, general manager/deputy chief administrative officer (DCAO) of the Public Safety Group retired after 33 years with the County. He began his career with the Sheriff's Department. As DCAO, Robinson was responsible for coordinating the County's criminal justice and law enforcement programs.

W. Harold Tuck, Jr., formerly the director of Housing and Community Development, has been named the new DCAO. Tuck joined the County in 1986 as EDP coordinator for Health Services.

While the search for a new director at HCD is underway, **Jeffrey Grissom** has been appointed acting director. Grissom was the department's assistant director. He

started with the County in 1993 as a staff assistant for the Board of Supervisors, but has spent most of his career in HCD.

Jack Miller started with the County in 1992 as assistant deputy director of Airports; he retired in March as director of General Services. Filling in as acting director is **Cathy Trout**, who was the finance director of the Community Services Group prior to her appointment. Trout has been with the County for 15 years, beginning with the Department of Public Works as a financial analyst. She also was a part of the County's "tiger team" that worked on the divestiture of the County's Solid Waste System.

(continued on page 2)

County Volunteers Honored

Volunteers who serve community programs throughout the County give an impressive amount of time and talent to make San Diego a better place to live. While numbers are still being tabulated for this fiscal year, last year close to 20,000 volunteers donated more than \$22 million in services.

To pay tribute to their efforts, the County held its annual volunteer recognition event on April 23, just prior to the Board of Supervisors meeting. Twenty "Volunteers of the Year" representing 17 departments were rewarded for their service with a certificate of appreciation.

The jobs held by these volunteers vary widely. They include the fire chief of the San Pasqual Fire Department and an advocate for nursing home residents. There's a woman who takes photos and writes bios of County shelter pets hoping to entice people to adopt them, and a family who donated six acres of avocado trees for a research project geared to increase avocado yield for commercial growers and San Diego gardeners alike.

Retired Teacher Finds Lost Souls, Fulfilling Volunteer Career

Among those honored at the Annual County Volunteer Recognition event in April was Rosemary Redditt, reserve lieutenant for the Sheriff's Search and Rescue detail.

A retired physical education teacher, Rosemary has actively volunteered in Search and Rescue for 24 years. Back in 1977 a friend heard about the search and rescue academy and instantly thought of Redditt, an avid backpacker and outdoors person. Although she's 70 years young, Redditt averages 130 to 150 hours of service each month between trainings, speaking engagements, mission searches and commanding the Search and Rescue Canine Unit.

"I guess it's such a terrific service, and the people you are working with are a cut above everyone else," Redditt said of her experience.

Just before her retirement in 1989, Redditt decided she wanted a dog—and that she would train her dog for search and rescue. In 1990, she became part of the very first canine unit and now works with "Barry," a three-year-old Doberman Pinscher. The dogs in the unit are primarily trained as wilderness search dogs, though



Rosemary Redditt and her partner, Barry.

they've helped locate 4-year-olds who have wandered away from a family campground, as well as Alzheimer's patients who have wandered away from home.

"How many people have you found?" is a common question that Redditt gets asked. Her answer: "The way we look at it is, within the search and rescue group, when a per-

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NewsBriefs

Block Party

Be on the lookout for a special coupon for discount admission to LEGOLAND for County of San Diego Employee Days, June 1-10. Coupons are being distributed with the May 10 paychecks and one coupon is good for up to six people. The offer is courtesy of the County's D.I.B.B.S. (Do It Better By Suggestion) program as a "thank you" to employees for their participation in D.I.B.B.S. If you do not receive a coupon, please call the D.I.B.B.S. team at (619) 578-5781 or 5779.

Retirements/Appointments

(continued from page 1)

Dan Eberle, who led the Office of Disaster Preparedness for 20 years, retired in March with 32 years of County service. **Willard Lewis** was appointed acting director. Lewis was the department's assistant director. He began his career with the County in 1985 as an administrative assistant in ODP.

Rich Sommerville, director of the Air Pollution Control District, retired after 30 years with the County. **Dick Smith**, who was assistant director of APCD, was appointed acting director. Smith has been assistant director since 1997 and started with the department in 1973.

Lana Willingham, who served as the head of the County Technology Office, retired in March as well. Willingham had been with the County since 1971. **Gary Clarke**, an 11-year county employee, was named acting director. Clarke began his career in the Department of Information Services.

Other key changes include the retirement of Public Guardian/Public Administrator **Don Billings**. **Patricia Frosio**, former chief of staff for the Chief Administrative Officer, was named to lead that office within the Health and Human Services Agency. Frosio joined the CAO's office in 1998, and also worked in the County's Competition and Reengineering Office and for Supervisor Ron Roberts.

Replacing Frosio as the CAO's chief of staff is **Janice Graham**. Graham was the assistant director of Media and Public Relations. She has been with the County for more than 15 years, starting off with the Board of Supervisors, then handling public relations for Public Works before joining the newly formed DMPR in 1997.



In Walt's Words

New Animal Shelter is a Boon for Employees, Animals and the Public

The County's wonderful new central animal shelter opened May 3, and it is truly a monument to perseverance and cooperation.

Perseverance, because it took the efforts of many people to overcome the obstacles to building this project. Supervisor Pam Slater, working with her counterparts at the City of San Diego, led the drive to enlist community support and raise money. Then, just one month before the new shelter was set to open last year, a devastating fire served as a temporary setback.

Cooperation, because the County, the City, the San Diego Humane Society, and generous donors all pitched in. As you may know, the City owns the land and building, and the County Department of Animal Control runs the shelter, along with providing animal care and control services for city residents.

I can tell you the sweat and tears were worth it. The gleaming new building, with a price tag of \$8.3 million, is cer-

tainly one of the most beautiful and functional animal shelters in the entire nation. I can't say enough good things about the County staff and their counterparts with the other agencies who saw this project through from the beginning.

One of the most impressive aspects of the new 38,000-square-foot shelter is its light, open and airy appearance. This building was designed to be inviting to the public so they would desire to go there and adopt deserving

animals. In the lobby, decorated with murals and sculptures of cats and dogs, are "puppy pens" where visitors can interact with animals available for adoption. Skylights abound throughout the kennel areas, and in the center of the building is a courtyard where prospective adopters can spend time with the animals off-leash.

Animal Control employees are going to love the new shelter as well. They moved from cramped trailers to a building equipped with new restrooms and showers, a fully equipped lunchroom/kitchen, and an

indoor sally port and kennels that will protect them from the elements while unloading animals or cleaning the kennels. Volunteers will use the new grooming room to make the animals look their best.

Soon, construction will begin on the Humane Society's new building adjacent to the county shelter, creating an animal care campus for the benefit of the commu-

nity and our animal population.

To everyone who participated in this project, you have my congratulations for a terrific job. I urge everyone else to go by and see this wonderful new County facility. And you might even go home with a new friend!



A kitten topiary welcomes visitors at the entrance of the new animal shelter.

Walt

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

The Supervisor's View

County Employees Serve the Public On and Off the Job



By Supervisor Greg Cox

Part of an ongoing series by the Board of Supervisors.

San Diego County employees are in the business of serving the public, and work hard to do so day after day. However, what is truly remarkable about our County organization is how many employees choose to serve others when you're off the job.

County employees contribute thousands of volunteer hours annually, through community service, fundraising and participation in local volunteer activities. I have spoken to a number of you who are mentors, charity marathon walkers and runners, blood donors, religious educators, or are proud to support a charitable organization with a financial contribution.

After the events of September 11th, I was touched to learn that thousands of employees contributed to relief funds and demonstrated their support for victims and families. The tragedy only served to lift our generous spirit higher. In April, we held a countywide blood drive. As a regular

blood donor myself, I was pleased to have the opportunity to donate during lunchtime at the County Administration Center. In fact, at the CAC alone, the San Diego Blood Bank collected 56 pints of blood from County employees. This is a commendable example of your commitment to helping others.

Also, this year over 20 percent of County employees have chosen to help San Diego nonprofit organizations with payroll deductions to the County Employees Charitable Organization (CECO) and United Way. 2002 contributions are expected to exceed \$15,000 per pay period in giving, with a potential to raise close to \$400,000 to help community organizations next year.

This generous spirit of service to others makes a world of difference to the people of our region and makes me proud to be a part of the County of San Diego, an organization of truly remarkable individuals.

Search and Rescue

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son is found, it's a team find."

Some of the hardest missions have been when the team isn't successful, such as with an extensive search in San Bernardino County when a lost boy was never found.

"You have a lot of compassion for the family because they have no closure," Redditt said. "Hopefully, you're going to find [the lost person] alive. But after that, you realize the family has got to have closure."

That makes the words "teams, hold your position," the most anticipated words spoken over the radio. That phrase typically signals that the person has been found.

So what has kept her going for all those years?

"You have to be dedicated," Redditt said. "Part of dedication is the desire to help some one and community service. Those are trite words that we use, but I think they are very valid."

"And, you have to enjoy it. I don't care how dedicated you are, if you're not enjoying it, it gets harder and harder."

Redditt has no plans to stop volunteering any time soon. Looking back, she never could have guessed that this work would have become so important to her.

"I'm just sorry I didn't know about it earlier. I could be working on my 40th year," she said with a laugh.

Ver•ba•tim

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees.

Lynn Plesetz (Treasurer-Tax Collector) was thanked for her prompt attention.

"I received the faxes when you said I would, and I appreciate your kind and friendly responses to my many questions."

Todd Adams (Civil Service Commission) was praised for his kindness and helpfulness.

"Todd showed great compassion for a fellow human being, exemplifying the type of service the citizens of the County of San Diego deserve."

Ranger Mary Ramsey (Parks & Recreation) impressed a couple staying at Lake Morena who needed to give out an emergency contact number. Ranger Ramsey offered her personal number so she could notify them quickly if a problem arose.

"I compliment Ranger Ramsey for her caring attitude and all the other staff for their friendliness."

Doug Isbell (Public Works) was called a "true credit" to the County for helping a builder through a complex process.

"The hard work, 'can do' attitude and thorough professionalism of Mr. Isbell were the keys in making a very difficult project become a reality."

Elvira Vargas (Registrar of Voters) was commended for her assistance to a customer.

"She is the most competent County employee I have ever seen in my life."

Ron Hobgood (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) was thanked for his prompt attention to a bee swarm at the North County Courthouse.

"I was particularly impressed by the way you were able to get to us the same day we called."

Yolanda Bada (Eligibility Technician, HHSA) was thanked for helping a client through a difficult time.

"You were always patient and helpful."

Veterans Service Office received a letter of thanks for making one family's dream come true.

"Through eight years you stood by Melanie's dream and vision of what she'll become tomorrow – a happy, successful dentist-to-be. That help and support from you through the years would always be a part of us."

Doug Mauck (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was praised for his work ethic.

"I would hold on to that employee of yours..."

Emilia Siller (Public Health Nurse, HHSA) received thanks for her work providing immunizations to families in the Logan Heights neighborhood.

"Emilia handled herself with professionalism and respect toward us. Thank you for having employees like Emilia."

Out of the Dark: HHSAA Employee Shines as Aide to Mental Health Clients

Joe Giacchina knows a lot about what his clients are going through. A case manager assistant in the Intensive Case Management program for County Mental Health, Joe can relate to the people he's trying to help because he's been there.

"I went through the dark ages," Joe said. "The denial, the relapses, and the good—the road to recovery."

After serving in Vietnam, Joe said he had a breakdown in 1975 and was diagnosed with a severe mental illness. He became a client of County Mental Health and five years later met a doctor who would eventually help him change his life. She helped him learn about his illness and how it works. His improvement continued with his next doctor, then skyrocketed after trying a new medication.

"It was like night and day, the veil came off," Joe said. "The colors were greater, all kinds of new things happened for me."

For the past six years, Joe has been with the Intensive Case Management program, first as a community living aide and now as a case manager assistant. It's a very hands-on job, visiting clients at least twice a week.

"Our clients are high-users, meaning they use the



Joe Giacchina ascended from the first floor of this County Mental Health building as a client, to the second floor where he now works.

[County's Psychiatric] hospital, they use the system a lot," Joe said. "Our job is to break them out of this, encourage them to get support so they can get off intensive case management."

Joe will do whatever it takes to get them back on their feet and back into the community. When they're struggling, he'll share his story and relate how

important it is to stay on their medication.

"If they take their medication every day—just like if you were a heart patient—you start progressing," Joe said. "Just because you feel good one day doesn't mean you don't have to take it the next."

It's not just his clients who benefit from Joe's experience. As someone who once used County services (he now is under the care of doctors at Kaiser Permanente), he's able to bring that perspective to the table in the workplace.

"That's why I was hired in the first place, as a consumer, to put my two cents in," Joe said.

At 53 years old, Joe says he's got no complaints about life. That's a lot to be said for a person who balances taking care of his own health, caring for his elderly mother, and taking college classes at night.

This month, he'll receive his bachelor's degree from National University, a milestone that he hopes will bring more opportunities for him in the County.

"I like learning new things and I'm open to it," Joe said. "I'd like to stay with the County. If I do get promoted after a couple of years I might look into a master's program. But you never know what tomorrow's going to bring. I just go day by day."

Local Artists Deck the Halls of the CAC Kids invited to take part in upcoming patriotic exhibit

When County employees and visitors walk through the first floor of the County Administration Center, more often than not they are greeted by colorful works of art along the walls. These displays are part of the Clerk of the Board's Art Halls/Art Walls program for public art exhibitions.

According to the Clerk of the Board's office, Art Halls/Art Walls was developed to educate the public about art and promote its value to society.

One recent popular display was "Flags Across San Diego County," a photography exhibit of more than 155 photos of the American flags and other patriotic images taken by San Diego County residents, as well as people from across the nation. The exhibit graced the walls of the CAC for most of January,

providing an inspirational welcome to those who entered the building.

The exhibit was so popular that its creator, Eileen Schwartz, is producing an upcoming exhibit called "Patriotism Through Children's Eyes." From May 31 to June 28, original artwork created by children and photos of American flags will be on display in the CAC.

County employees have the opportunity to get their friends and family involved in this display as well. Kids from around the county are invited to submit their own illustrations, using an American flag template that's available at the Clerk of the Board's office.

To find out more, stop by the Clerk of the Board's office, or call (619) 531-5600. Artwork is due by May 29.

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

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This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

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COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones May:

35 years

Mary E. Rademaker (Superior Court)
Eugene A. Schmitt (Sheriff)

30 years

Patricia L. Beatty (HHSA)
Robert H. Grissom (Housing & Community Development)
Sharon C. Harrington (HHSA)
Jane S. Heins (Superior Court)
Stephen E. Hon (HHSA)
Lois E. Hubbard (HHSA)
Jack A. Keirse (General Services)
Emily M. Piner (District Attorney)
James L. Young (HHSA)

25 years

Joe S. Cardenas (Parks & Recreation)
Shirley K. Culver (HHSA)
James R. Daniels (General Services)

Maria E. Garland (Auditor & Controller)
Kenneth E. Gordon (Sheriff)
Michael J. Harris (General Services)
Lurena A. Henry (Superior Court)
Cornelius L. Hill (HHSA)
Linda K. Hodges (Superior Court)
Lawrence P. Lyle (Public Works)
Dana Marsh (Superior Court)
Douglas C. Mauck (Assessor)
Michael J. Medearis (Sheriff)
Guadalupe Michel-Guerrero (HHSA)
Ernest H. Milner, Jr. (Planning & Land Use)
Paul R. Newell (Sheriff)
Larry D. Purdue (Public Works)
Arturo C. Quinoz (Assessor)
Clay F. Reynard (Sheriff)
Gloria Linda Ruiz (District Attorney)
Rosemarie Schmidt (Superior Court)

Barbara A. Sherman (Superior Court)
Douglas F. Tomkiel (Sheriff)
Gloria A. Velasquez (HHSA)
Nancy E. Whalen (Planning & Land Use)
Patricia A. Williams (HHSA)

20 years

Michael I. Appelman (Superior Court)
Cathy W. Bell (Superior Court)
Kimberly A. Brown (HHSA)
Terrance M. Corrigan (HHSA)
Franco Delrosario (Sheriff)
Doris P. Ingalls-Smith (HHSA)
Donn A. Lipera (Environmental Health)
Lonnie L. Lucas (Environmental Health)
Roger D. Mathias (Sheriff)
Bulana Usasilp (HHSA)

In Memoriam

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports that the following retired employees recently passed away:

Eldon C. Anderson (Public Works)	2/26	Jack M. Manary (General Services)	3/17
Clyde S. Arthur (Probation)	3/13	James McElroy (Welfare)	2/27
Glen E. Brock (Parks & Recreation)	2/24	Patricia McNabb (Welfare)	2/21
Ivy Collyer (County Counsel)	3/20	Delmar Mitchell (General Services)	2/25
Gene C. Cowley (Sheriff)	3/16	Harriet D. Northway (Assessor)	2/22
Jeanne Ferguson (Health Services)	3/10	Hope Rankin (Health Services)	2/6
Ruth Folck (Health Services)	2/20	Sandra Rawls (Welfare)	3/16
Walter L. Hill (Assessor)	3/22	Ruth F. Richter (Social Services)	3/7
Barbara L. Hundley (Social Services)	3/11	William E. Rose (Welfare)	9/24
Gordon P. Jones (General Services)	10/31	Frank A. Stegeman (Social Services)	2/25
Hollis Jones (Sheriff)	3/9	Elvira E. Steiskal (Welfare)	2/15
Milan S. Jurash (Public Works)	3/26	Billie D. Zeh (Welfare)	3/29

Our thoughts and prayers also go out to the family and friends of Carolina Avendano of HHSA (12/31) and Sandra L. Newkirk of Auditor & Controller (3/21).

County News Extra includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4632 or e-mail at rcarmich@co.san-diego.ca.us. Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MSA-359, Attn: *County News*.

Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

Janet D. Ayers
Robin F. Baker
Paula C. Brooks
Margaret Caplinger
Teodorico C. Casares
Daniel J. Clifford
William Ernest Edgin

Paul V. Insunza
Hilaine Julian
Richard K. Larimer
Donna Levin
Bruce D. Macleish
Carol J. Martin
Gail L. McCarthy

Marie E. Mortensen
Vernetta A. Myers
Virginia Roth
Ruth White
Millie J. Wilkes
Warren A. Williams
Francille Wilson